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SENSITIVE

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TAGS: PGOV PREF PREL MOPS UG SU

SUBJECT: NORTHERN UGANDA: KONY REQUESTS ANOTHER MEETING WITH LRA
DELEGATION

¶1. (SBU) Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leader Joseph Kony has requested that UN officials make arrangements for another meeting with his negotiators to discuss the Final Peace Agreement (FPA). UN Special Envoy for LRA-Affected Areas Joachim Chissano's Office in Kampala is making arrangements for the meeting to take place on September 6 at Rikwangba, Southern Sudan. The head of the office, Warner Ten Kate, is pessimistic that the meeting will hold because Kony has accused his chief negotiator, David Matsanga, of assisting the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) in setting up an ambush against him. Four LRA defectors who arrived in Kampala on August 29 report that Kony has no intention of attending the last meeting and has no plans to sign the FPA. End Summary.

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KONY ASKS FOR NEW MEETING DATE
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¶2. (SBU) On August 28, LRA leader Joseph Kony called Warner Ten Kate to reschedule a date for a meeting with the LRA delegation. According to Ten Kate, Kony said that he now understood that he would not have to surrender himself or his soldiers if he showed up at a meeting with his delegation to discuss the FPA. Kony told Ten Kate that he believed that the skirmish between LRA and SPLA on August 21 was evidence of a set-up by Matsanga. Kony allegedly believes Matsanga, Government of Southern Sudan mediator Riek Machar, and the SPLA are colluding to kill him. As a result, Ten Kate is not optimistic that the meeting will hold. Nonetheless, the UN has agreed to provide two helicopters (one for the participants and the other for Machar and his bodyguards to attend the meeting). If the plan holds, Chissano will arrive in Kampala on September 5. The group will depart for Juba on September 6 and then travel to Rikwangba the same day.

¶3. (SBU) The SPLA sent a high-level team to Rikwangba to meet with the LRA on September 3 to smooth over any issues related to the past skirmishes, according to Ten Kate. The donor-provided food remains at Nabanga and the LRA can decide whether to accept it. Ten Kate told P/E Chief that he does not expect the LRA leader to show up for the meeting. Ten Kate also stated that he suspects that something will come up to prevent Matsanga from attending given Matsanga's fear that Kony wants to kill him. Ten Kate stated that if this attempted meeting fails to materialize, in his view, it would be time to bring the peace process to closure.

¶4. (SBU) Ten Kate had read the press reports of the U.S. designation of Kony as a global terrorist and asked if the U.S. move would anger Kony. Matsanga read about the elevated designation and told Ten Kate that the move was "administrative" in nature because the LRA was already on the U.S. terrorist list. Matsanga also reiterated his position on several websites.

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NEW LRA DEFECTORS SAY KONY NOT INTERESTED IN PEACE
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¶5. (SBU) Four more LRA defectors arrived in Kampala on August 29.

Okello Richard, Odong Moses, Ochaya Charles, and Ojara Patrick, were signalers in Kony's Control Alter (High Command). They range in age from 19 to 25 and have spent between three and twelve years in captivity. They range in rank from private to sergeant. Three of the defectors escaped together in the middle of the night. They walked for a day and one-half, traveling through the night to reach Dungu. The fourth defector walked to a Congolese military unit, where he said he was abused and was threatened with death. He escaped and wandered around lost for five days before a local administrator, who also harassed him, contacted the UN Mission in Congo (MONUC).

¶6. (SBU) One of the defectors was part of an advance team that went to Nabanga on August 21 to collect food that was provided for the meeting between Kony and his negotiating team. When the LRA advance team arrived at Nabanga, the SPLA fired upon them. Two SPLA soldiers were killed in the ensuing firefight.

¶7. (SBU) According to the defectors, Kony has no intention of attending a meeting with his delegation or surrendering. They agree that Kony will continue to manipulate donors and the process in order to get food and buy time. For tactical reasons, Kony could send his deputy, Okot Odhiambo, to meet with the mediator and facilitator. The defectors said that there are many more potential escapees who are looking for opportunities to flee. The defectors were adamant that Kony did not want a peace deal and that he killed his former deputy, Vincent Otti, because the latter wanted peace.

¶8. (SBU) They said that Kony's youngest son, Joseph Kony Bush, burned himself while playing near a pot of boiling water, and needed medical attention. Bush's condition is serious and he is being treated with traditional medicines. BG Dominic Ongwen is not ill,

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but had spent two weeks in his house waiting out Kony's wrath. Ongwen had gotten drunk and accidentally stepped on Kony's foot one night at dinner. Kony was furious and threatened to demote Ongwen. (Note: This would not be the first time Ongwen was in trouble with Kony. He was in Kony's bad graces for consorting with the UPDF when moving out of northern Uganda and southern Sudan. End Note.) Kony does not drink and generally forbids it, but senior commanders often engage in drinking.

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COMMENT
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¶9. (SBU) We do not believe that the proposed meeting between Kony and his delegation will hold. If it does not, it will be up to Chissano and Machar to determine whether to declare the peace process dead, or to continuing pretending it's not.

BROWNING